

Old Road to Bloomfield
Newark, NJ 07104
December 20, 1980

Mr. Thomas J. Alrutz, Director
Newark Public Library
5 Washington Street
Newark, New Jersey 07101

Dear Tom:--

I feel obligated to give you my version of a happening at the Newark Public Library on Thursday, December 18, 1980 about 3:20 p.m.

D and I had been at the film showing on the fourth floor. We exchanged season's greetings with Mrs. Threadgill at the Information Desk and were proceeding toward the vestibule to go to the street when suddenly the big black man (wearing what appeared to be a fez on his head and a cross around his neck) whose name I understand is Brown, reached under the counter, pulled out a wooden billy about 1 1/2 or 2 feet long and went through the swing doors to the vestibule with great determination.

He applied the billy at least six times, probably more, with apparent force to the legs and buttocks of an inert bundle of clothing stretched out on the floor, with insistent demands that he get up. When there was no response from the man, Mr. Brown picked him up and heaved him out the front door, down the steps and onto the sidewalk, throwing his paper bag after him, returning then with an air of complete justification to return his bill to the shelf under the counter.

The older white man who seems to be a permanent fixture, not moving from his stool in the cloak room opposite Mr. Brown's post, this time was standing and watching this whole procedure with D and me. I told him to call the police. He muttered withdrawal from involvement. I went to the woman at the check-out counter telling her what happened and asked her to call the police. She said she would call her supervisor, who shortly appeared saying she would call Mr. Malanga. Mr. Malanga followed almost immediately. I told him what had happened. He went outside where D was standing; returned, used a key to unlock the telephone and dialed.

At this point Mrs. Threadgill suggested I go to tell you. I went to Personnel where I pointed out that the guard had beaten a man with a billy who was either drunk or sick and the man could easily die in front of the Library. Your secretary thereupon called Mr. Abram out of your staff meeting and I told him my story. He went down-stairs. While D was standing out in front a black male student came along, sized up the situation, pulled the man up into a sitting position and propped him up against the wall. The man was so dirty it was hard to tell anything about his features. I would guess he was Hispanic. Mr. Malanga told D that the police would decide whether to send an ambulance or not. At that point we left.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. D. J. Henderson